



Connecticut  
Family Support  
Network

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Tesha Imperati  
Parent and Executive Director  
Connecticut Family Support Network

Governor Malloy's Proposed Budget  
Department of Developmental Services  
Department of Public Health

Members of the Appropriations Committee;

My name is Tesha Imperati, I am a parent of a child with a disability and the Executive Director of the Connecticut Family Support Network (CTFSN). The Connecticut Family Support Network exists to help families raising children with disabilities and special health care needs.

I am writing to you to voice my concern about three items that are listed in Governor Malloy's Proposed Budget regarding DDS Grad Funding, DDS Voluntary Services and DPH Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs Respite Funding.

In the proposed budget it does not include funding for high school graduates. If the DDS Grad program is not restored the impact on Connecticut families and the State of Connecticut will be significant. The long term costs to Connecticut to provide both residential and day supports for individual with intellectual disabilities will significantly outweigh the short- term cost of restoring Grad Funding into the DDS Budget.

DDS Grad Funding will serve about 300 individuals in each of the next two fiscal years at an average cost of \$40,000 per year.

**Please restore DDS Grad Funding to the DDS Budget for FY16 and FY17.**

The DDS Voluntary Services Program provides important services to families who have one or more children at home who, in addition to having an intellectual disability, also have severe behavioral and communication problems. Many of these children and adolescents have the severe form of autism.

The Governor's proposed budget calls for the cut in the DDS Voluntary Services Program from \$32,719,305 to \$12,986,713. It seems that there may be a lack of recognition that the VSP actually saves money by making it possible for families with children at home to keep them home instead of seeking out-of-home placements.

**Please restore DDS Voluntary Services Program to the DDS Budget.**

The Governor's budget reduces funding for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN) through the State of CT Department of Public Health. These funds

support the CT Medical Home Initiative for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs.

The Respite Program associated with the funds provide relief necessary to prevent negative health impacts experienced by family caregivers caused by ongoing stress related to caring for a child our youth with special needs at home.

**Please restore the DPH Medical Home Respite Funding to the DPH Budget.**

**Connecticut families need your support.**

Thank you for your time.

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